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**NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY
FOR
TOMORROW**

By

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4 NOVEMBER, 1990

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Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE 04 NOV 1990		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 04-11-1990 to 04-11-1990	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE National Security Strategy for Tomorrow				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National War College, 300 5th Avenue, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC, 20319-6000				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT see report					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 12	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

The Cold War may or may not be over but one thing is certain ... the world has changed. The bi-polar struggle of the late 20th century is gone. The Soviet Union is deteriorating and the United States faces new challenges and threats. The question now is - What national strategy will best ensure America's physical security in the future? In the past we have relied on isolationism, balance of power, and hemispheric defense as strategies for national security. Now, however, I think we must turn to collective security as our strategy for the future. Other strategies have worked in the past but I do not believe they will be very useful in the new world.

A viable national security strategy has to be based on national interests and objectives. It must consider the threats to national security and the power and resources available to counter those threats. It has to be realistic and flexible. In light of this, we can look at the various national security strategies using the following areas for analysis (National War College, 1990):

ASSUMPTIONS - We can't have a perfect picture of the world or our nation so we have to make assumptions. What are the basic facts that will influence and/or constrain us now and in the future?

INTERESTS - What are our national interests?

THREATS - What are the present and future threats to our national interests?

POWER & RESOURCES - How powerful is the nation and how much are we willing to spend to obtain our objectives?

OBJECTIVES - What do we have to accomplish to safeguard our interests?

STRATEGIES - Can a given strategy be used to obtain national objectives and is that strategy feasible?

The following framework and analysis is not complete and it is not a static entity. All of the factors mentioned are dependent on world events and they will vary with time. This is only a best guess at the critical factors effecting our national security and strategy.

ASSUMPTIONS

1). The Soviet Union will remain a major player on the world stage.

A bi-polar world model is no longer applicable but we can't ignore the USSR.

2). The USSR will continue to concentrate on internal problems. The expansion of the USSR and the promotion of Communist regimes will no longer

be of prime interest to the Soviets. The U.S. will not have to contain the "Soviet Threat".

3). **A complete collapse of the Soviet Union is possible.**

4). **Eastern Europe will continue to build and strengthen free democratic regimes.**

5.) **Nationalism will continue to spread. Artificial states and boundaries will be hard to defend.**

6.) **Japan and West Europe will continue to be economically powerful. They will control more and more of the world's wealth.**

7.) **The Western World will continue to depend on oil for economic health. The Middle East will remain an important area for the U.S. and developed countries.**

U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS

The following list covers some of our major national interests. The details have varied over time but the core elements have been fairly constant.

1.) **National survival.** This is the overriding object of our national policy.

2.) **Prosperity and national welfare.** Once survival is ensured we need to

focus on the welfare of our people.

3.) Preservation of national values. The preservation of the American way of life is important. Our nation has definite values and their preservation can take precedence over other interests.

4.) Value projection. Americans have always felt that it was their mission to spread the "American Gospel". We believe in our way of life and we feel that it is in our interest to spread that system around the world.

THREATS

There are external and internal threats to our national security. The degree to which each threatens our interests varies but they all pose either a short or long term threat to the nation.

1.) Soviet nuclear weapons. The existence of large numbers of nuclear weapons within the USSR continues as a threat to our security. The probability of nuclear war has decreased but it is still a possibility.

2.) Spreading nationalism. The accelerating spread of nationalistic movements throughout the world poses a serious threat to our interests. Civil wars and regional conflicts could drag us into unwanted wars or cut off

important resources (oil). Our survival could be imperiled by a civil war within the USSR.

3.) **The economy.** The U.S economy is on a downward trend and our position in the world may be in jeopardy. Even if the current trend is only temporary, it shows that our economy is not as resilient as it once was and we are now much more susceptible to economic warfare.

4.) **Illegal Drugs.** The sale and use of illegal drugs in the U.S. is having serious effects on our way of life and welfare. Increases in the level of the drug trade could seriously threaten our national security .

POWER & RESOURCES

The United States is the most powerful nation in the world. The sum total of our military, industrial, economic, and political resources is unmatched.

There are however, definite limits on our resources as well as on our will. Our national objectives must be set with this in mind and limited to those things that we can accomplish with the resources available. The American people will only be willing to convert resources to actual power when a given objective is definitely in our national interest.

OBJECTIVES

Our foreign policy objectives should be based on our national interests and within our power and resources. Ends and means relationships must remain clear and we should not set objectives that are not attainable or are not in the national interest. Objectives should also be prioritized for resource allocation.

1.) Deter wars. This is our primary objective and it supports all of our interests.

2.) Stabilize the USSR and Eastern Europe. The stability of the former communist world is a must. The total disintegration of the USSR would create a large power vacuum that would destabilize the world.

3.) Reduce the national debt. This one of the biggest causes of our economic difficulties. Reducing and eventually eliminating the debt is required to rebuild and maintain a strong economy.

4.) Reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Recent problems in the Persian Gulf and the threat of war with Iraq say enough.

5.) Provide for the Third World. Stable democratic governments and free trade throughout the world are in our interest and foreign aid will be required

to achieve this goal.

6.) Reduce drug trafficking. Internal and international efforts must be expanded to slow the flow of illegal drugs. The total eradication of illegal drugs would be nice but it is not possible in the near future.

STRATEGIES

Now that we have laid out a framework for our national security we will look at several strategies (isolationism, balance of power, hemispheric defense, and collective security) and see how they fit. All of these strategies have merit but I believe that only one of them can allow us to meet our national objectives and interests as stated.

Isolationism. Isolationism as practiced prior to WW I is one of the options for the U.S. in the coming years. Retreating back to "Fortress America" has its appeal in that it would allow us to concentrate our resources at home and ideally increase our prosperity and reduce the national debt. Our interests of survival and the maintaining of our values might also be attainable and we might be able to project our values using the "city on the hill" approach (i.e. the shining example).

The problem however, lies in the fact that isolationism basically ignores the threats of Soviet weapons and worldwide nationalism and assumes that we could cut all economic ties with the world or at least count on good will to guarantee the flow of strategic materials. This is a naive approach that can't possible work in an interdependent world where there are ample examples of the lack of good will (Iraq & Iran). Modern technology and the global economic market have made the world too small for isolationism.

Likewise, this approach ignores the Third World and could result in years of instability and conflict, both of which would hurt world markets and could lead to major wars involving other developed countries. American isolationism could not keep us out of the First World War and it will not keep us out of WW III.

Finally, isolationism would not be able to stop the world wide drug trade and it would make it impossible for us to solve our own drug problem. International cooperation is the only way to win the drug war.

Balance of Power. Historically this has been one of the most successful national strategies. It was practiced in Europe for years and it was an integral part of the bi-polar world. It could be organized to acknowledge the threats and allow the U.S. to meet most of its national objectives and goals.

The problem is that the world is not as simple as it once was and a clear balance of power is not possible in today's world. There are simply too many independent players and too many different threats to individual nations. The monolithic threat of Reagan's "Evil Empire" is gone and we would have a hard time knowing what to balance.

Also, if we could balance the world's powers we would still only be practicing a strategy of the "status quo". A true balance of power would make it difficult for us (or any other nation) to make significant gains in relation to the rest of the world. Thus our national interests of value projection and increasing our prosperity (hence power) and our objectives of aiding the Third World would be in conflict with our strategy.

Hemispheric Defense. This semi-isolationist strategy would allow the U.S. to define its area of interest as the Western Hemisphere (although like FDR we could redefine the limits of the hemisphere). Again, it would give us the opportunity to concentrate our efforts and hopefully attain our objectives for economic prosperity, deterrence (at least in the hemisphere), and help for the Third World. The problem is that like isolationism it completely discounts the threat from the USSR and ignores the rest of the underdeveloped countries - areas that are far too important to be left alone.

It also does little for our objective of stabilizing the USSR and East Europe and makes our interest of value projection a little shallow. Hemispheric defense can help us economically and it can help the war on drugs but it cannot lead to the realization of all of our national interests.

This leads us to our final strategy COLLECTIVE SECURITY. This is the answer to today's national security needs. Modern collective security strategy is extremely complex and will look nothing like former security arrangements. The change from a bi-polar world will necessitate a complicated series of security agreements based on mutual interests and threats. All of the major players will be involved in numerous agreements all acting as checks and balances to the overall system. The United Nations (UN) will be the primary player but the diversity of needs and objectives will drive the international community into other overlapping agreements.

The United States' role will be one of leadership. Other countries have economic power (Japan and Germany) or military power (USSR) but only the U.S. has all of the types of power necessary to be the world leader. And it is this leadership role that will allow us to meet all of our national security objectives and hopefully interests. Maintaining a strong military and a system of defense agreements will deter wars and insure our national

survival. Economic agreements and multi-national aid programs will help the Third World, reduce our national debt, and increase our prosperity. These same agreements will also give us (and the rest of the world) our best weapon against the drug trade...cooperation. Finally a good collective security system will establish the kind of international arena that will allow us to project our values to the rest of the world in a positive and productive manner.

The establishment of a COLLECTIVE SECURITY strategy is not the only way to ensure the survival of the United States. It is, however, the best way for us to pursue our national objectives and interests in today's world. The U.S. should establish a system of worldwide collective security and establish a NEW WORLD ORDER based on the principles of peace, democracy, and free trade.